

Now, as I do not expect the above contrivances (though totally changing the character of the dome cavity, and making it as attractive as it now is repulsive) to render the space under it much lighter than at present, it will be essential to the effect I have in view to darken considerably the remaining windows (especially the aisle ones), that the bounds and extremities of the building may retire afar (though I think "expression of vastness" a very minor consideration in itself), and yet more, that the approaches intervening between the world and the oratory may interpose also a solemn preparatory gloom—a sort of night,—to divide day from day,—to obliterate the old and introduce the new, the different, the uncommon, unworldly light of the lofty middle oratory, shed from no visible windows, casting almost no shadows, so equably showered down from the great illumined concave, that will seem to phosphorence with a mild splendour of its own, like the moon after sunset, because the source of its light, as of hers, will be unseen, and the intervening air be hardly crossed by a ray but from itself.

Now, whether this darkening of windows elsewhere should be chiefly or entirely effected by colour, or by other obstructions, is a hard question. Were it not for this need of darkening, I should, regarding the windows alone, give them but partial colouring, and that far from deep,—leaving most of the glass colourless. But then I should not hesitate a moment to replace the present iron substitutes for millions by stone tracery,—i. e. in the round headed windows a pillar (of Corinthian proportion) between two pilasters, bearing two small arches and a circle, in the Byzantine manner; and in the segment-headed ones, two pillars near the sides, and a palladian head. The only foolish thing I ever read of Wren's is that objection to tracery (in the survey of Salisbury cathedral), as "thinking to add beauty to light." This is just like a few of Ruskin's pretty things, said for the sake of displaying a quaint, elegant turn, so that though all his principles, and nine-tenths of his details, are pure gold tried seven times in the furnace, you never can trust him out of eight one moment. Wren must have known that, whether we "add beauty to light" or no, we must add, in vaulted buildings, narrow window to narrow window, and perforation to perforation; or else, if we make great wide voids like his, add supports to the glazing; and the question is not, which adds most beauty to light, but which takes away least,—the stonework left between the grouped apertures of old, or the chequered gratings he has substituted, both for their stone, and their equally beautiful lead-work. Certes, I do not think these add much beauty to light.

Now the pillars, &c. above mentioned would be thick enough to obstruct fully half the present light, and so, perhaps, supersede much colouring. But milk for babes!—the present iron mullions (which are certainly well designed in their way) must, I suppose, remain as long as they will hold together, and then the public will be a little older; and till then, we have no resource for darkening but colour, deep and almost total, as in the Early English. But as the way of applying and managing it belongs to the decoration proper, which must centre in and depend on the dome, I must next recur thereto; and the length to which this lighting matter has extended warns me to make another letter of my ideas on the decoration, if you think them worth having; for I do not at all imagine they are so good as hundreds of other people could give, nor do I suppose any one of the things I have proposed to be new, or that they could fail to strike every architect who really determined to do his best. But I wish to make this distinction, that what I have said hitherto I put forth as necessary, as things that must form part of any successful scheme of decoration; whereas the rest will be merely my particular scheme, which is probably hardly worth notice, decoration being no talent of mine. But I do not believe the best decorator who ever lived could make it a successful work without the above preliminaries fully carried out.

E. L. GARBETT.

#### IN RE "E. L. G." AND ST. PAUL'S.

SOMETHING is likely to come out of "E. L. G.'s" scheme for remodelling the interior of St. Paul's, very much that he has said being calculated to call forth reply and lead to fresh subjects of discussion. Apart from the project itself, which will, no doubt, strike many as a very chimerical one, several of his incidental remarks are calculated to give umbrage in more quarters than one, since they hit where they do not appear to be levelled. Hardly will a writer whose views tend to upset so much of what has hitherto passed current as sound architectural doctrine and criticism, feel otherwise than disappointed should his opinions now elicit none from others, either in opposition to, or in support of them. The silence of acquiescence might be mistaken for that of contempt, or, *vice versa*, the latter for the former.

Unless it be turned over, and well ventilated every now and then, criticism is apt to become exceedingly stale, mouldy, and musty. I myself, and E. L. G. appears to be the same, am for free trade in criticism,—for free discussion: what shrinks from such ordeal betrays the consciousness of weakness. And surely if unrestricted liberty is now allowed in almost everything else, certainly in politics, it may be very safely extended to matters of art and taste. At any rate, the wildest, most revolutionary, and most unprincipled doctrines with regard to them, neither endanger the state, nor embarrass a ministry; yet while the freest expression of opinion is allowed in regard to the conduct of public men, not even so much as a syllable must be whispered to the prejudice of Mr. A. or Sir X. Y. Z. Nothing at which such *illustrissimi* as the latter could possibly take offence may be even so much as breathed, so much more happy is the position of a Peckeniff to that of a Premier, or a Chancellor of the Exchequer. You may assail either Lord Derby or Mr. Disraeli with the foulest blackguardism, with impunity; but to show up a Peckeniff, more especially if he were one who could boast of well-greased paws, would be thought most illiberal; or if not actually thought so, would be so described. All this, it must be admitted, is deviating widely from my starting-point, but it also points to what operates greatly to the prejudice of architecture, by suppressing that interest with the public which it would derive from animated discussion and the legitimate conflict of opinions. Whenever any discussion of the kind does take place, it rouses public attention; and if it seldom does so to any purpose, it is because the discussion itself is hurriedly dropped,—broken off without anything decisive on either side being arrived at,—and so people relapse into their wonted drowsiness and indifference. There is nothing like keeping the game alive,—a principle acted upon, and not without success, in almost everything except architecture, whose friends and followers appear to be addicted to opium-eating, somnolency, and dreaming, the dreams of some of them being about invisible curves of the Parthenon!

Instead of striving to excite interest among the whole of the public, that is, among all the generally well-informed classes, the architectural profession appear to be solicitous to confine it to their own circle, which I cannot help taking to be, and therefore calling, exceedingly stupid policy. Save architecture, every subject, from singing to sermons, is made a topic of conversation: let that be attempted to be brought forward, and every one shuffles away from it as quickly as possible.

Never will architecture thrive steadily until the public become far better instructed with regard to it than at present,—capable of criticizing, and therefore capable of taking an intelligent interest in it, and accordingly of patronising it judiciously. Educate the public: that is one main point; and if it be asked, how are the public to be educated? the reply is, by unrestricted criticism, and by the freest possible discussion on both sides of every argument. To what purpose have we organs of opinion, if what is fearless opinion may not be uttered freely? If nothing is to be publicly said but that which cannot by any possi-

bility give offence to any one, we may as well be silent, or go to sleep at once; and if not his whole paper, that passage in it ought to have been suppressed where E. L. G. says, "And as for capitals, if the architects cannot design a dozen, all better than any in Rome or Athens, I will engage in ten days to find Englishmen that can!" To have said "as good," would have been bold enough, but "better!" All I will say is, that in such case we can very well afford to discard both Stuart's Athena, and Desgodets, and all our present copybooks of that description. Q. E. D.

#### MEDALS TO THE AUTHORS OF PLANS FOR THE BUILDING FOR THE GREAT EXHIBITION OF 1851.

OUR readers will remember the report, published at the time in our columns, of the Building Committee on the designs sent in for the Great Exhibition Building, which amounted to nearly 240. On 67 of these the committee reported them as "entitled to honourable and favourable mention on account of architectural merit, ingenious construction or disposition, or for graceful arrangement of plan," and called particular attention to seventeen of these as being "entitled to further higher honorary distinctions, on account of distinguished merit, showing very noble qualities of construction, disposition, and taste;" and the committee concluded by "calling attention to the designs accompanied by models of Monsieur Hector Horeau, architect, of Paris, and of Messrs. Turner, of Dublin, as evincing most daring and ingenious disposition and construction." We are gratified to learn that each person who submitted a design is to receive a *sericea medallion*, which will be accompanied by a certificate, on which will be stated the more special commendation of the Building Committee.

The designs by Mr. Dyce for the heading of the two certificates, which will be made to serve all the parties engaged in the Great Exhibition, have been engraved. In the first, Peace descends in the form of a winged female, and scatters wreaths over emblems of Industry and Science. In the second, Peace has an olive-branch in her hand, and the lion and the lamb at her feet. Science has for his companion a child, who bears a Cornucopia, and the Great Building forms the back-ground.

#### THE EXHIBITION OF THE ART-UNION OF LONDON.

THE works of art selected by the prizeholders this year form a very interesting Exhibition, at the Suffolk-street Gallery, and show that they have exercised a very reasonable amount of care, when it is remembered how few pictures comparatively they had to select from, at the different galleries. All the works of the leading artists were commissions, and many others were bought on the private view days, before the prizeholders obtained their right to select. It consists of 163 works, all placed so that they may be seen, and thus giving the artists a second chance for public favour. Few who visited the Academy, will believe that Mr. Phillips's "Magdalen," (44), the great feature of the exhibition we are now speaking of, was there. It comes out in its present position as unquestionably one of the finest pictures of the season. Hereafter when Mr. Phillips is a R.A. and has all his works bespoken, so that Art-Union prizeholders will not be able to get them, we hope he will not follow a bad example by turning up his nose, and without a thought for the disinterested labours of the conductors of the society, sneer at it with the remark that the pictures bought are mainly those of young and second-rate artists! Mr. Knell's large sea piece (23), is better seen than it was. The principal prize, "Our Saviour with the Woman of Samaria," by Cornelius, of Munich, selected by the Rev. H. Silthorpe, is not very satisfactory: the subject, doubtless, weighed with the rev. prizeholder. We have already given a list of the principal pictures, and need not now enter into particulars. Danby, Allen, Boddington, Willis, Witherington, R. A. West, Williams, Clint, Hulme, Tennant, Wilson, Juteum, and others have some excellent landscapes. Gill's "Leap-